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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: February 13, 1958

SUBJECT: Continued Discussion of Current Berlin Political Problems with
Mayor Brandt

PARTICIPANTS:

Honorable Willy Brandt, Mayor of Berlin	Mr. John Devine, GEA
Dr. Günter Klein, Berlin Senator for Fed. Aff.	Mr. Clifford J. Quinlan, GER
Mrs. Eleanor Dulles, GER	Mr. George Bogardus, DkW
Mr. John Piercey, Labor Advisor, EUR	
Mr. Leon Goldenberg, ICA	

COPIES TO:

Mr. Lisle, GER
Amembassy, BONN - Mr. Tyler
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Mr. Creel opened this second meeting by asking the Mayor whether he had any additional questions not covered in the meeting of the previous afternoon. Mayor Brandt stated he had no further questions.

1. The Mayor's Call on the Soviet Commandant in East Berlin

Mr. Creel then stated we would be interested in the Mayor's reaction to his call on General Chamov. Mayor Brandt stated that the General had opened the discussion by expressing the hope that cultural relations between the USSR and the Federal Republic might be improved. (The Mayor commented here that this discussion of Federal Republic affairs with the Mayor of West Berlin was unprecedented.) The Mayor next told Chamov he thought it useless in this meeting to discuss the problem of the two German states but that West Berliners, particularly the "Kleingärtner," with gardens outside the borders of West Berlin, had small problems which could be solved. General Chamov countered with a denunciation of cartoons in the West Berlin press which offended the Soviets and said that much could be done in this respect to improve relations between the two halves of Berlin. When the Mayor said the initiative should come from the Soviet side, the General referred to the Mayor's long retinue of press cars on this trip to Soviet headquarters. (The Mayor commented here that although he gave the General an explanation of free press initiative, it was clear that the General neither believed nor understood this.)

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2. Soviet-GDR

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2. Soviet-CDR Relationships in Berlin Access Questions

Mrs. Dulles asked whether the Mayor saw any signs that recent difficulties with the Soviets on documentation of Allied travel and transport represented a Soviet effort to prepare the way for the GDR in this field. Mayor Brandt stated that the events of October through December indicated, in his opinion, that the Soviets were not now weaker in relation to the GDR, but stronger. The Mayor said he believed the SED had intended to go further in isolating Berlin and had discussed a kind of passport for East Germans entering West Berlin, but that the Soviets told GDR officials not to go that far. The Mayor added that there had been no difficulty recently with East-West Berlin border traffic or with bordercrossers. Senator Klein mentioned the question of East Berlin taxation and social insurance on bordercrosser wages, but Mayor Brandt stated that this would have no great economic effect in West Berlin.

3. Communist Infiltration into West Berlin

Mayor Brandt stated, in reply to a query from Mr. Piorcey, that there was no doubt the SED had placed "non-party" representatives in West Berlin factories but that no "considerable" trouble was expected. The West Berliners, he said, have means of spotting these troublemakers and are not greatly concerned.

The Mayor added that he expects a larger propaganda attack from East Berlin toward the end of this year. The SED has the delusion they can get over five percent of the vote in the fall elections and will attempt to organize large meetings of East Berliners in West Berlin. The Mayor said his administration would permit the SED to use a few small meeting halls, but would make sure that the large meeting places were reserved. He added that he would pay close attention to District Wedding, the pre-war Communist stronghold.

4. West Berlin Municipal Elections

Mayor Brandt stated, in answer to Mrs. Dulles' question about the prospects for the fall elections, that the "liberals" were losing support and that the contest would be between the SPD and the CDU. He and Federal Minister Lemmer, as Chairman of their Berlin parties, had already agreed to place a "limit" on the nature of the campaign. He said, for example, that neither party would claim exclusive credit for the city's economic progress. Mayor Brandt said a private "Gallup" made for the Berlin SPD indicated that dissatisfaction with education was widespread, although vague, and that education might be an issue. In reply to direct questions, Mayor Brandt stated that neither the Allied occupation nor coalition problems would be issues in the election. The Mayor said that he expected the present coalition government to continue after the elections.